PEER Environmental Technology Seminar

Oct. 11-12, 2006, Montpellier, France

Parallel session 1e synthesis

Developing Environmental Technologies

Eco-design, R and D, verification-testing and labelling, green purchasing, etc.

Developing Environmental Technologies

- Chair:
  - Daniel Froelich, ENSAM, France
- Reporter:
  - Klaus Rennnings, Zew, Germany
- Speakers:
  - Annele Eerola,VTT, Finland
    - Emerging new technologies for clean production and water treatment
  - Francesco Degli Innocenti, Materbi, Italy
    - Plastic films in agriculture

Objectives of the discussion

- Define brakes and opportunities of environnemental innovation in a win-win scheme

How to enhance and make more reactive the development and use of environmental technologies

- Fact : european companies are not always ready to take the advantages of environmental legislation:
  - Development of technical innovation is quite long:
    - Need of long term european environnemental strategy
    - Encourage the company to collaborate with researchers at the early stage of the development
  - Validation process of technologies is very heavy:
    - Can we standardize in a voluntary way the validation process (ecolabel?)
    - Development of simple methods as a pre-screening
  - More European funding for high-risk projects (radical, disruptive technologies. More funding for demonstration projects.
  - Lack of information on environmental innovations for end users
    - Communication on EI has to be enhanced by EC

MARKET:

- Key Word : « Confidence » in eco-innovation:
  - Develop Communication on ecolabel
  - Develop Communication on eco-technologies

- Support the market
  - Green purchasing, public procurment dedicated to eco-innovation
  - Research on Social acceptability of european customers

SYNTHESIS

- Discussion about drivers of environmental technologies:
- Some argue that information of users accelerates the use of environmental technologies
- Others argue that incentives are only partly sufficient to use environmental technologies

Regulatory Push/Pull Options

- Option of voluntary Environmental Technology Verification (ETV) system
- Goal: Reference for new technology
- Experience: US is in advance of market introduction, although Europe is technology leader, because they have such a system
- Reason may be that they have a verification system
- Difference of validation systems: differences in involving stakeholders etc.
- Keyword is “confidence” of consumers, users

A practical example: biodegradable plastics

- Acceptance of farmers crucially depends on:
- Guarantee level of biodegradability
- No Toxicity
- Was confirmed, but a costly measure (took 6 years)
- Need for labels, standards

Research Needs

- Information exchange between EU projects, from the perspective of the end user
- Development of simple, rapid screening tests for environmental technologies (ETV light)
- Long term research should be independent of criterion competitiveness (which is short term)
- Certain amount of money should be given to high-risk projects (radical, disruptive technologies)